

SHOCHIKU

"HAKUZOSU"

COMIC DANCING PLAY

WRITTEN BY TOMIKO KIMURA

TO BE PRESENTED BY ENNOSUKE TROUPE AT TOKYO
THEATRE MARCH, 1947.

SYNOPSIS:

The old fox inhabiting the hill Furuzuka resented the huntsmen Tarosaku and Jirosaku because all his family were caught by them.

One day he visited them in the disguise of the priest Hakuzosu, their uncle. He reproached them for taking animal lives. They first ignored the conduct but came to confess it after all. So the old fox persuaded them to give up their cruel deed and to throw away the trap.

The two hunters, however, fecketed out the fact and layed the trap again in the fox way.

The old animal, on his way home, was much surprised at human wisdom finding the trap waiting for him. Carried away by appetite, however, he was caught in the trap, when Tarosaku and Jirosaku hurried to the scene.

While the two hunters went to the village for help,
the old fox freed himself from the trap and ran away with
desperate effort.

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VOL. I :

(The stage represents a hunter's hut.)

Nagauta recitation:

"The withered miscanthus of the wild

Wave ba shful greetings

In the setting sun-shine."

"I have come out of my old residence

And have walked through the grassy road."

(The Old Fox comes into stage, disguised as the priest
Hakuzosu.)

Old Fox: I am the Old Fox well-known hereabouts. Well, the
hunters over the mountain have caught all my family.

Nagauta:

"And they mean to catch

Even myself, genius of the hill."

Old Fox: After much consideration, I have made up my mind to
disguise myself as their uncle Hakuzosu the / priest,
and to persuade them out of their cruel deed.

Nagauta:

"And he looks at his own face

Mirrored in the water of the brook."

Old Fox: How I do look like him! Well, shall I go?

Nagauta: "Thus he reached the door
Of the huntsmen."

(Comes into the main stage.)

Hakuzosu: Good day, my nephews. Are you in? I'm your uncle
Hakuzosu.

Nagauta: "The brothers Tarosaku and Jirosaku
Come for him to the door."

Taro: Welcome, uncle.

Jiro: It's so late for you to come.

Taro: Step in, please.

Nagauta: "As the two nephews cling to him
He strikes them with his fist."

Taro: What do you mean by this, uncle?

Jiro: What has offended you, sir?

Hakuzosu: You impudent boys. Don't feign innocence. All the
people that visits my temple tell me that both of you
are engrossed in catching foxes. It's highly improper
a deed for you nephews of a priest.

Taro: I'm quite sure we haven't done such a thing.

Jiro: It must be our fellow hunters. We're quite conscience-free.

Haku: How stubborn you are. I won't own you as nephews
any more. Don't expect me to accomodate you with
money and rice hereafter. Fare you well.
(About to go. The nephews checks him.)

Taro: Wait a minute, please I'll confess you. We just
happened to catch one, and felt so much interested
in the game -----.

Jiro: That we got wholly given up in it.

Taro: And we've caught four ----- or five of foxes.

Haku: So you have. It was true. And what do you do with
them?

Taro: Oh, nothing. We just peel their skin -----.
(The two hunters dance,)

Nagauta: "It's so good as carpet
And their meat is very nice,
To eat in potage with potatoes and onions."

"Their bones, on the other hand,
We burn and make into black paste
Having much effect for burns and wounds."
(Meanwhile Hakuzosu looks frightened.)

Taro: And so we are ----

Jiro: Rather well-off, you know.

Haku: ~~How~~ How frightful. Foxes are so vindictive, you
know. You two will be severely revenged. I'll just
describe some examples.

Taro: Please do.

Haku: I'm so tired after much walking. Give me the bench
there.

Taro: Certainly, sir.

Jiro: Here it is,
(Hakuzosu takes to dancing.)

Nagauta: "Foxes are naturally divine
And are treated as deities
In India, in China and in Japan."
"In the era of Emperor Toba
When there was a poetic contest
A gust of wind arose suddenly
And all the candles were put out all of a sudden,
When a ray of ~~the~~ light
Set forth out of Lady Tamamo's person
To shine upon the splendour of the palace."

Taro: What a wonder.

Jiro: And what happened next?

Haku: Well, then -----.

Nagauta: "Abe-no-Yasunari, the fortune-teller,

Told the emperor that it was done
By some ghost.
And, making a gorgeous altar,
He held a religious service.
Tamamo-no-mae, unable to hold out any more,
Revealed her natural shape
Of a white-faced nine-tailed fox
And went away to Nasu plains
Riding the clouds that floated in the sky."

Haku: The emperor said: "She must be hunted at once."

Nagauta: "So the two warriors,
Miura-no-suke and Kazusa-no-suke
Went hunting to the Nasu plain."
The fox, virtuous as she was,
Became weaker and weaker
To fall shot at last
Her body was 35-feet long
And her tail was 45 feet in length.
Her spite, when killed,
Got so revengeful
As to catch and kill
All the birds, the animals and even human beings
That came across her dead body.
Her tomb-stone, even to this day,
Is famous as the "killing stone".

Jiro: How frightening a story.

Taro: I'll just give up hunting foxes.

(Meanwhile the brothers sign and wink at each other,
suspecting that Hakuzosu may be a fox in disguise.)

Haku: I'm so glad you've made up your mind to listen to me.
Well -----? Should like to see the ----- the trap
you use to catch foxes.

Taro: Withe pleasure, uncle.

Nagauta: "The Fox looks at the machine
Fearfully and frightfully."

Taro: Here it is.

Haku: It's very impertinent of you to thrust such a dirty
thing before me a priest. And what's the thing attached
at the end?

Jiro: It's a friend rat.

Haku: (Sniffs)

Taro: Foxes, attracted by the smell, approaches the trap
and get caught in it. Then we catch them and peel
their skin. It's so pleasant a game.

Jiro: A rat, out of ten, may well free itself if only it
licks its skin with it oil-covered tongue and slip
out of the rope. To my wonder, no rat ~~the~~ ever
tries to do it.

Haku: Foxes are so foolish idiots.

Haku: I won't listen to you any more. Just throw it
away at once.

Jiro: , I'll throw it away after you go back.

Haku: That won't do. As far as you have the trap, you
might be enticed to catch a fox. If you really mean to
give it up, throw the trap into the river in my presence.

Taro: Then I'll throw it into the river there. -----
Both suspect Hakuzosu to be a fox.

Nagauta: "Both Taro and Jiro are speaking what they don't
think. Exchanging glances, they hide the trap in

secret.

----- They hide the trap.

Taro: Uncle, we have thrown the trap into the river.

Haku: That is right. Come and see me at the temple one of these days. I've got nothing to entertain you, except tangle and Japanese pepper, but please come and have some tea. So long!

Both: Good-bye.

Haku: Good-bye.

Nagauta: "When the priest speaks these words (as tangle and Japanese pepper,) they part.

----- Both go away.

Nagauta: ----- "Hakuzosu smiles looking at them when they go away."

Haku: Men are simple. I've transformed myself into their uncle, the priest and advised them. Thus I have deceived them. ~~Now~~ Now all the world is mine. Ha, ha, ha. It deserves them right. Now I'll sing a happy song.

----- He sings.

Haku: I'm going now. As I live here in the village, My love affair becomes the talk of the whole village.

I'm going now to my old mound on tiptoe.

With an air, with an air, with an air.

----- Hakuzosu goes away, in good humour, using his cane to the time of the music.

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VOL. II:

(A stream is seen by the road of chrisanthemum and
pampass grass. A fox trap is cast away.)

Nagauta: ----- "I'm going, I'm going back to my old
mould,
The rain is falling in the coppice of the Inari
shrine where a bridal procession goes in pompous
train."

(The Old Fox comes into stage.)

Nagauta: "The Old tradition tells
That a female fox
Disguised herself as a human wife
To requite the kindness
Of a hunter who had saved her."
"Oh, how fearful is human being.
For, lo, there lays the trap
That the hunters told me
To have thrown away."
"How does a trap
That has caught all my family
Look like, I wonder?"
"And he approaches the trap."
"How sweet it smells!
It's a fried rat.
Shall I eat it?
Oh, no! I'll be caught, then."
"And he goes away
His appetite remaining behind."

(The Old Fox goes out, as if for life.

The hunters Tarosaku and Jirosaku
come into stage on a light music.)

Nagauta: "The hunters Tarosaku and Jirosaku,
Happily drunken,
Come across."

Taro: Why, the trap has been moved.

Jiro: No man can have done it. It's the fox, I'm sure.

Taro: Ah, then, the Hakuzosu that visited us some time ago
was really the old fox we have been hunting for.

Jiro: How shall we revenge him?

Taro: Don't be so discouraged. I'm quite sure he'll come
again as he has touched the trap once. We'll just
arrange the trap again and reveal his natural form.

Nagauta: Let's catch, let's catch
Esquire Hakuzosu,
For he really is the old fox.
Of whose mischief is much talked about.
Let's have a good feast and banquet
If we succeed in catching him."
(The two hunters hide themselves
behind a shrub. Hakuzosu appears again.)

Nagauta: "As the owl tuwhoos upon a pine branch
And the wind of the midnight
Visits the shrub of chrysanthemums,
The Old Fox,
Attracted by the smell of the fried rat
Approaches the trap, but wait a minute,
I'll be caught if I don't

(He flies at the rat after some hesitation.)

Nagauta:

"As he is but a miserable animal,

He flies at the decoy

And lo,

He's fairly caught in the trap

With a sorrowful cry ~~of~~ "Kwai".

"At this the hunters

Present themselves from behind the shrub

And rejoice in their success.

But, as the fox is too big

For them two to carry to their house,

They go for help to their fellow hunters."

(Tarosaku and Jirosaku retire from stage.)

Nagauta:

The Old Fox, quite desperate now,

Does his best in ~~his~~ his trial to get away.

He licks his own skin and makes it oily

And there he stands saf and sound."

(The moon shines upon the scene.)

(The Old Fox, with the rat in his mouth, retires

from stage dancing and rejoicing, accompanied by

a rustic music both gay and light.)

-----Curtain-----